

REMARKS

The Examiner will see that no amendments are made to the application. Furthermore, applicants address only the same issues regarding the disclosure of Darcie. Therefore, no new issues are raised and this response should be entered.

Applicants have carefully studied the Examiner's response to applicants' previous arguments but firmly maintain their submission that Darcie (US 6,493,335) does not disclose that "the OLT equipment comprises collision detection logic" as required by claims 1 and 5, and that Darcie does not disclose corresponding features in method and computer-readable medium claims 12, 15 and 17.

The Examiner explains his position further in paragraph 18 of the detailed action. The Examiner refers to column 5, lines 1-12 of Darcie and recites the disclosure that "for those packets damaged due to collisions within the IN's local serving area, the bridge 14 has the built-in function to automatically discard those packets". Thus, the Examiner argues that the bridge has the ability to "detect collisions within received packets" and that Darcie teaches collision detection logic at both the OLT and the outstations. Applicants firmly believe this to be in error.

The disclosure that switched bridge 14 automatically discards damaged packets does not mean that it performs collision detection and one skilled in the art would not interpret it as such. All it means is what it says - namely that the switched bridge discards damaged packets.

Secondly, taking the sentence referred to by the Examiner in the context of the paragraph in which it is found, the Examiner will immediately see that it is IN 15 which is described as resolving local contention (i.e. performing collision detection). Thus, column 5, lines 1-3 discloses "for upstream transmission, IN 15 resolves local contention and passes the upstream packets to the distribution port of the switched

bridger 14". Similarly, column 5, lines 9-12 disclose "for upstream transmission, the system of the invention uses each IN 15 to coordinate the upstream traffic and resolve contention in each IN's local serving area independent of other parts of the network. Thus, the Examiner's argument contradicts the immediate context of the passage relied on.

Thirdly, taking the disclosure of Darcie as a whole, it is abundantly and consistently made clear that the central office/head end (CO/HE) does not perform collision detection. The very abstract of the disclosure describes "a communication network uses intermediate nodes to resolve local traffic contention. intermediate nodes receive upstream signals from end users, derive traffic information signals from the upstream signals, and transmit the traffic information signals to end users. By listening to the traffic information signals from the intermediate node, the end users know whether upstream transmission channels are idle or busy, or whether a collision has occurred".

Furthermore, switched bridger 14 is described in the greatest detail at column 4, lines 38 to 59. This passage contains no disclosure whatsoever of collision detection functionality. Switched bridger 14 is simply a packet switching device.

Fourthly, Darcie consistently discloses that it is the Intermediate Nodes (INs) in conjunction with the End Users (EUs) that perform collision detection. Thus, in a first embodiment, Darcie discloses that the EU performs collision detection (see column 5, lines 41-49). In a second embodiment, Darcie discloses that it is the Traffic Monitor (TM) 16 of IN 15 that performs collision detection (see column 8, lines 16-28).

Applicants therefore firmly submit that the Examiner's rejection can no longer be sustained in view of the clear teachings of Darcie and therefore respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the present application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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